An Appeal For Fairness

(Fifth in a Series)

Anatomy of a Smear

In less than fifteen minutes Presidential speech-writer Patrick J. Buchanan "beached" the Watergate Committee, DEBRIDED Sam Ervin, DE-LITANIZED Lowell Weicker and DEODORIZED the air of "the rankest compound of villainous smell that ever offended nostril."

According to one Democratic member of the Senate Select Committee, Pat Buchanan "MADE US LOOK LIKE A BUNCH OF FOOLS" (Washington Post, September 28). Two other Democratic Senators "ADMONISHED THE STAFF AFTER YESTERDAY'S HEARING *NOT* TO PRODUCE MORE WITNESSES LIKE MR. BUCHANAN" (New York Times, September 28). WHY NOT? Why should not the Ervin committee staff produce more witnesses like Pat Buchanan? And why should an honest, forthright witness make the Ervin committee members "look like a bunch of fools"? Are they more comfortable with errant, immunity-bribed witnesses subject to judicial blackmail? Is this why the TV networks are backing off? Has Ervin without his villainous witnesses ceased to be an attraction? THE QUESTIONS ARE RHETORICAL—FOR WE KNOW, AS WE KNEW ALL ALONG, THAT THE PURPOSE OF THE ERVIN COMMITTEE WAS NOT TO BRING OUT THE TRUTH, BUT TO BRING DOWN THE PRESIDENT. Harpooned by Buchanan, the "beached whale, the Senate Watergate committee is wheezing and blowing in its final throes a hulk that has begun to pall as a tourist attraction and poses a problem in its disposal." (*"The Dirtiest Trick," by William Safire, New York Times, Sept. 27, 1973.).*

Following is a partial text of Mr. Buchanan's statement before the Ervin committee:

"Mr. Chairman, members of the committee:

For a variety of reasons, I appreciate the opportunity to appear before your select committee. But in candor, I cannot speak with the same enthusiasm for the manner in which the invitation was delivered.

At the President's personal directive, his White House staff has been called upon, and has cooperated, I believe, fully with this committee.

Specifically, this witness has certainly done so. Nevertheless, the surprise announcement that I was to be called as a public witness before these hearings was made over national television—before even the elementary courtesy of a telephone call of notification had been extended.

Of greater concern to me, however, has been an apparent campaign, orchestrated from within the committee staff, to malign my reputation in the public press prior to my appearance.

In the hours immediately following my well-publicized invitation, there appeared—in the Washington Post, the New York Times, . . . and on the national networks—separate stories, all attributed to committee sources, alleging I was the architect of a campaign of political espionage or dirty tricks.

According to the Post, committee sources were in possession of my memoranda recommending "infiltrating the opposition."

In the Times, the charge was that the committee had a series of Buchanan memoranda suggesting "political espionage and sabotage against (Sen.) Edmund S. Muskie of Maine and other candidates for the Democratic presidential nomination."

One wire service stated "that Mr. Buchanan would be questioned about 'blueprints' and 'plans' concerning 'the scandal.' " . . .

Mr. Chairman, this covert campaign of vilification, carried on by staff members of your committee, is in direct violation of rule 40 of the rules of procedure for the select committee, which strictly prohibits staff members from leaking substantive material.

Repeatedly, I have asked of Mr. (Samuel) Dash (majority counsel for the committee) and Mr. (Terry) Lenzner (assistant majority counsel) information that they might have to justify such allegations.

Repeatedly, they have denied they have any such documents.

When I asked Mr. Lenzner who on the committee staff was responsible, he responded: "Mr. Buchanan, you ought to know that you can't believe everything you read in the newspapers."

HIS JOKE. MY REPUTATION.

So it seems fair to me to ask: How can this select committee set itself up as the ultimate arbiter of American political ethics, if it cannot even control character assassins within its own ranks?

For the record, Mr. Chairman, let me state the following: I did not recommend or authorize, nor was I aware of, any on-going campaign of political sabotage against Sen. Muskie or any other Democratic candidate.

I did not recommend, either verbally or in memoranda, that the re-election committee infiltrate the campaigns of our opposition . . .

Now, let me move quickly to the heart of the public allegations, against me—but more generally against our presidential campaign.

It is being argued that illicit Republican strategy and tactics were responsible for the defeat of the strongest Democratic candidate for President —and for the nomination of the weakest.

It has been contended publicly that the Democrats were denied—by our campaign and strategy—a legitimate choice at their own convention.

It is being alleged that the campaign of 1972 was not only a rigged campaign, but an utter fraud, a political coup by the President of the United States.

These contentions, Mr. Chairman, are altogether untrue. Republicans were not responsible for the downfall of Sen. Muskie. Republicans were not responsible for the nomination of Sen. (George) McGovern (D-S. D.).

To suggest that is first of all to do a grievous injustice both to Sen. McGovern and his campaign organization.

Sen. McGovern was nominated, because his men wrote the rule book; his men were in the field earliest and worked hardest; his campaign was precisely targeted on the primaries they could win; and because he was possessed of the best political organization the Democratic Party has seen in at least a dozen years.

It was not Donald Segretti who put together the organization that carried for Sen. McGovern the crucial Wisconsin primary.

It was not any agent of the Committee to Re-elect the President who was out winning McGovern delegates in states like Georgia, Virginia and Louisiana.

It was not our personnel, but theirs, who worked out their victorious campaign and convention strategies. The McGovern people won their own nomination—and they lost their own election.

Theodore H. White has written in his latest and best campaign history: All of the dirty tricks of 1972, added together in the ultimate balance, had the "weight of a feather." . . .

As for the general election, Mr. Chairman, the President of the United States did not achieve the greatest landslide of any minority party candidate in history because of Watergate and dirty tricks—but in spite of them.

The reasons for the landslide of 1972 are chronicled elsewhere; they need not be repeated here at length. Basically they are these:

—The President read the mood of the nation better than his opponent.

—The President has conducted an Administration, for four years, that had won the confidence or support of millions of Democrats.

—The President's stand upon the issues of defense and welfare, upon taxes and government, upon coercive integration and bussing were closer to what the American people wanted than those of his opponent.

But we won as well, Mr. Chairman, because of the quality and character of our candidate.

If one looks back over the political history of this country, there is only one other man, other than Richard Nixon, who has been his party's nominee for President or Vice President five times. That is Franklin Roosevelt.

No other individual in our political history has served in both of the same high offices for so long a period of time as has the incumbent President.

He is not the leader of a majority party. He has been—since 1946—a member of the minority party in American politics. And thus, this political career, I believe, is all the more impressive.

That political record, Mr. Chairman, is no accident. . . . And the mandate that the American people gave to this President and his Administration cannot and will not be frustrated or repealed or overthrown.

We deeply regret our inability to bring you the full text of Mr. Buchanan's statement and his testimony DUE TO LACK OF FUNDS — The same holds true for many of our messages which would serve to present a fair and balanced viewpoint unveiling the self-seeking politicians and the "liberal" biased media, determined to counterfeit the will of the people. Foremost among the offenders are the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post.* Not far behind are NBC, CBS AND ABC radio and TV networks as well as hundreds of local stations who continue to violate FCC rules by denying us a forum. WE NEED YOUR HELP! We need your continued faith in the ideals of FAIRNESS! We need your maximum contribution to reach our fellow Americans. Please fill out coupon below and make checks payable to: FAIRNESS TO THE PRESIDENCY.

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